



-Photo by Mike Meyers

J. J. Amaya plays all the songs that he believes the Hispanic community wants to hear.

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'Lowriding' DJ plays tunes low and slow

Amaya appeals to Hispanic audience every Wednesday

By Derek West
Contributing writer

Every Wednesday night at 6 p.m. on the Ohlone College radio station, 89.3 KOHL, you can catch something different than the normal top-40 music format: "Lowriding with J.J."

The program has been around for 12 years, and its creator, J.J. Amaya, isn't thinking of stopping now. Once a youth counselor for troubled kids, he planned the format to appeal to the Hispanic community.

"The Hispanic community was missing role models, and I wanted to find another way to fill that missing link," he said.

"Lowriding with J.J." has a definite following. At about 5:45 p.m. each Wednesday, the phones start to ring and they never stop after that. "I get about 25 to 30 calls on a given show. I have the 'Lowriding with J.J.' show on for one hour only once a week, so I don't play it out. It's all about supply and demand," Amaya said.

Never having worked at a commercial station, Amaya doesn't see himself as a celebrity. "I'm just fill-

ing that cultural gap," he said.

Amaya loves his work. "It's a very positive show," he said. "I love to invite anyone listening to call up and say what's on their mind." Amaya's show is mainly love dedications, put to good old-fashioned soul/lowriding music.

"One time I had a girl on the air and she was calling long distance. Well, all of a sudden, the operator broke through the call for more money. I didn't know what to do, so I asked if I could play a song for her. It all turned out great," he recalled.

That's the difference between "Lowriding with J.J." and shows on some of the other stations. All of his phone calls are taken live, while the others usually pre-record them.

Amaya says "Lowriding with J.J." is his hobby, and it's easy to see in his eyes the love and excitement he gets from doing his show. His many fans indicate the affect he has had on kids that were trying to fit in.

"If kids believe in themselves they can do anything. Look at me, I'm living proof," he said.

Amaya says he will continue to do "Lowriding with J.J." as long as the college or his listeners don't become negative toward his show.

"There are three types of people in this world. People that wonder about things that could happen, people who watch things happen and people who make things happen. A wise man once told me 'Go wherever you want to go, but never forget where you came from.'"